INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a basic guide to help you with your move to the UK.

It contains information on topics which will help you in the important initial stages of moving and finding work.
This handbook relates to people from the European Economic Area (EEA) and is accurate at the time of going to print, although it will be updated during the year to reflect any changes within the UK in relation to immigration.

The European Economic Area (EEA) consists of the following countries and those that are highlighted are those countries that are considered as part of the A8.

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* Bulgarian and Romanian nationals looking for work in the UK need permission to work before coming to the UK and starting employment.

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are not members of the European Union (EU) but citizens of these countries have the same rights to enter, live in and work in the United Kingdom as EU citizens.

This handbook has been produced in five different languages: English, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Lithuanian.
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Looking for accommodation

If you are looking for accommodation you might find it useful to:

- Look in the local newspapers
- Check advert cards in shop windows or post offices
- Get advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau should be able to provide you with a list of accommodation agencies. You can find your local centre online at www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Search the following website, www.roomsforlet.co.uk/index.html for rooms to let across the country
- Check if your employers supply accommodation whilst you work for them
- Contact Shelter for emergency housing www.shelter.org.uk or phone Shelter’s free national helpline on 0808 800 4444

Renting private accommodation

Accommodation owned by private landlords or organisations can be found by searching local newspapers, websites and shop windows.

If you want to rent accommodation in the private sector, the options are:

- Lodgings – a room in a private house or flat where you live together with the landlord/landlady
- A bedsit or a room in a house or flat shared with other people. You would normally have to share all the amenities with other people. This type of accommodation is not as expensive as some other options and the rent usually includes the cost of all bills so you don’t have to pay any additional costs

You can also privately rent a house or flat for your sole use. This can be quite expensive dependent on which area you move to. If you want to keep costs to a minimum and you don’t want to live with people you don’t know, you could rent a house or flat with relatives or friends. Bills are not normally included in the rental cost of property.

For further information contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau, www.citizensadvice.org.uk or visit the website www.adviceguide.org.uk

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Any property shared by three or more unrelated persons is legally referred to as a ‘House in Multiple Occupation’ or HMO. All HMOs need to be licensed by the local council to ensure that certain safety standards are met. For your own safety, you should not accept shared housing that does not have an HMO licence.
The landlords have a duty of care to ensure that:

- Proper fire safety measures are in place
- The property is not overcrowded
- There are adequate cooking and washing facilities
- Communal areas and shared facilities are clean and in good repair
- There are enough rubbish bins

For further information contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau, www.citizensadvice.org.uk or visit the website www.adviceguide.org.uk

Accommodation agencies
An accommodation agency may be able to help you find accommodation owned by a private landlord. If you register with an agency you will be asked what type of property you are looking for and how much rent you are willing to pay. You will normally be asked to give details of your job and income, and may also be asked to provide references from your employer, bank, and present or previous landlord. There are costs involved in using an accommodation agency.

What an accommodation agency can charge for:
When you register with an accommodation agency, it is only legally allowed to charge a fee when it finds you somewhere to live. The fee an agency charges can vary greatly, but you only have to pay it once you have signed a contract to accept the tenancy of a property. You should ask each individual agency about the services they provide and the fees they charge, before you decide which one to use.

What an accommodation agency cannot charge for (it is against the law):
- Putting your name on its list or taking your details
- Providing a list of properties available for renting
- A deposit which will be returned if no suitable accommodation is found

If you decide to rent a property, you must read any contract or other document carefully before you sign it, and get a copy for yourself. You must also get receipts for all payments. Do not sign any contract you do not fully understand. If you need help with legal rights, you can get free advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau www.citizensadvice.org.uk

When you rent private accommodation, most landlords will ask you to pay one month’s rent (in advance). Rent is the money paid to your landlord in return for the right to occupy their property. It can be paid weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, as agreed between you and your landlord.
Renting Housing Association Accommodation

Housing Associations provide affordable rented housing. Rents for this tend to be lower than for private rented accommodation. There are certain restrictions on who can apply and there are often long waiting lists. Contact the county council in your area for further information on these properties. Details can be found in your local telephone directory or on the website www.direct.gov.uk/ on the Government, Citizens and Rights section – local councils.

Deposits

This is a payment in addition to the rent paid by the tenant. The amount is usually equivalent to one or two months’ rent, is held by the landlord or agent throughout the tenancy and will be withheld should the tenant or their visitors cause any damage to the property.

The deposit cannot be used as payment for the final period of the tenancy. You will receive your deposit back after you have left the property if there is no damage.

For further information visit the Directgov website, that also has information regarding what to do when things go wrong with renting, protection against eviction and general housing advice www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/BuyingAndSellingYourHome/RentingAHome

Emergency accommodation

The Shelter website provides information about a range of housing options, including help for homeless people and private renting. The website address is: www.shelter.org.uk. If you need advice and help in an emergency, you can also phone Shelter’s free national helpline on 0808 800 4444 to talk to a housing adviser who can explain your rights, tell you your options and tell you what is available in your area.

When you have taken up a tenancy

Safety in the home

The landlord is usually responsible for any repairs and general maintenance of the property including:

- Heating and water installations, basins, sinks, baths etc
- Repairs of the structure and exterior of the property
Housing standards:
Property should be safe and healthy for the tenants, it should provide:
• Adequate heating
• Safe electricity and gas supplies
• Sanitation (drains, basins, sinks, baths and toilets) in good working order
• No fall or trip hazards
• Water-heating equipment in good working order
• Damp-free accommodation

Gas and electricity appliances should be maintained in good order and regularly checked by a qualified installer registered with CORGI (Council for Registered Gas Installers).

All electrical appliances like cookers, toasters and washing machines must be safe to use; if the landlord provides new appliances, he must provide instructions on how to use them.

Fire safety
There must be adequate fire escapes. Depending on the size of the property, fire detectors, smoke alarms, fire blankets and fire extinguishers should be provided. You are entitled to a free fire safety check by your local fire service, for further information visit www.fireservice.co.uk

Bills
As well as paying the rent you will also need to take into account additional costs such as council tax, water rates, gas bills, electricity bills, TV licence.

Water rates, gas bills and electricity bills are paid to private companies and the amount of these bills will vary depending on how much you use the services and which area you live in.

For further information see;

Gas and electricity supply:
Energywatch – provides advice on gas and electricity supply.
Tel: 0845 906 0708
Email: enquiries@energywatch.org.uk
www.energywatch.org.uk/

British Gas/electricity
Tel: 08457 888 400
Water and sewerage:
OFWAT – provides advice on your water supply and other water issues
Tel: 0121 625 1300/1373
Textphone: 0121 625 1422
enquiries@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk
www.ofwat.gov.uk

Additional useful websites
www.moneysupermarket.com
www.ukpower.co.uk
www.saveonyourbills.co.uk
www.water-guide.org.uk/rates.html

Council tax
Council tax is paid by all households in the UK. This is a tax paid to your local council. If you are on welfare benefits or a low income, you may be entitled to council tax benefit which will reduce the amount of council tax you have to pay. Your local district borough council will be able to tell you how much you are required to pay, or visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

For further information visit www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/tax/council_tax.htm

Telephone
Most houses in the UK have a phone line. The telephone company will usually be able to connect you to their network through this line for free. You will have to pay to have a phone line fitted if there is not already one running into your home. If there are already telephone sockets in the accommodation, there is normally a connection charge.

Useful contact – www.bt.com or telephone 0800 800 150

Television licence
If you have a television, you must have a television (TV) licence. You can get a TV licence application online at www.tvlicensing.co.uk or call 0844 800 6790. A colour TV licence costs £139.50. A black and white TV licence costs £47.
SECTION TWO

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR WORKING IN THE UK
If you are a British citizen or a national from the European Economic Area (EEA) you do not need permission to work in the UK. Nationals from eight of the new member states of the European Union (Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic) need to register with the Worker Registration Scheme within one month of starting work.

The following countries are members of the EEA:

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**Worker Registration Scheme (WRS)**

If you come from one of the new EU member states, you are required to complete a WRS Application Form within one month of starting work and your employer will need to give you a letter confirming your start date. After 12 months of continuous employment you no longer need to be registered. For full details contact the Home Office on 0870 521 0224 or via the website: [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk)

If you come from one of the new EU member states and intend to be self-employed, you do not need to register with the WRS scheme. However, you will need to register with HM Revenue & Customs. To register to become self-employed call HM Revenue & Customs Newly Self-Employed Helpline 0845 915 4515. You can also download a form to register as self-employed from the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) website, visit: [www.hmrc.gov.uk/selfemployed/](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/selfemployed/)
Bulgarian and Romanian nationals looking for work in the UK need permission to work before coming to the UK and starting employment.

**Bulgarian or Romanian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS)**

To be able to apply to come to the United Kingdom under the SAWS (Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme) you must be a national of either Bulgaria or Romania. The SAWS is designed to allow farmers and growers in the United Kingdom to recruit low-skilled overseas workers to undertake short-term agricultural work. You will be issued with a work card. This work card gives you permission to work in the United Kingdom for a fixed period of time. You will be allowed to work in the United Kingdom under the scheme for up to six months. You will be paid at least the Agricultural Minimum Wage and will be provided with accommodation by the farmer or grower employing you. For further information visit [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/saws/](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/saws/)

Information about living and working in the UK is available from the UK Border Agency website [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk)

If you are from outside the EEA you may still be able to work in the UK if you are eligible for a work permit. Your passport will be stamped to indicate whether or not you are able to work in the UK. You will be required to sort out work and apply for the necessary visas before leaving your country of origin. For further information refer to: [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk) or telephone: 0870 606 7766

**Tax and National Insurance**

In order to work legally in the UK, all individuals require a National Insurance number. Individuals’ National Insurance numbers are used to keep a record of Social Security contributions. If you earn more than (roughly) £80 a week, Income Tax and National Insurance contributions are taken directly from your pay. In return for paying taxes, individuals are entitled to Social Security benefits. Your employer should help you to apply for a National Insurance number and you will receive a payslip from your employer which shows details of the deductions that have been made.

For further information and to apply for a National Insurance number call the Jobcentre Plus National Insurance line, 0845 600 0643, or visit one of your local Jobcentres. These are normally based in the town centre, or can be found in your local directory. For further information refer to [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)
When you move to the UK you will usually need a bank account so that you can be paid by your employers, obtain cash and pay others.

To open a bank account, you must provide the following information:

- Proof of identity (passport, identity card or national driving licence)
- Proof of UK address (tenancy agreement or letter of confirmation from your employer)
- Proof of employment is also often required

If you don’t have any of the documents, the bank might be able to accept a letter from a responsible person who knows you, eg your employer. Each bank has its own policy and should explain what documents they require. When you first arrive in the UK, you might not be able to open a current account. Instead, the bank will offer you a basic bank account.

A basic bank account will allow you to:

- Have wages and other money paid in
- Pay your bills by direct debit
- Cash cheques for free
- Pay in cash
- Withdraw without charge from cash machines

It will not allow you to go overdrawn.

Some basic bank accounts may offer you access to an account at the Post Office, a cheque book or a debit card. It doesn’t cost anything to open a basic bank account. However, if there is not enough money to pay a direct debit you have set up, you may be charged.

**Current account**

This type of account allows you to get money out using a cheque book and guarantee card or a cash card. You may also get a debit card which you can use in shops and cash machines. The bank may let you have an overdraft and access to other kinds of credit. Most banks can transfer money overseas. Charges can be checked at the time of opening an account.

**Cash machines**

Most withdrawals are free. However, a growing number of cash machines make charges. If so, a warning on the screen will tell you and ask if you want to continue.
SECTION THREE
FINANCE AND BANKING

Cashback
This is a facility offered by supermarkets which allows you to withdraw cash, free of charge, when paying for your shopping by debit card.

Cheques
If you receive a cheque and you don’t have a bank account, you can cash it at a cheque encashment centre. You will be asked for identification and proof of entitlement. They usually charge a high proportion of the cheque’s value for this service.

Post Offices – Post Office branches are available throughout England and offer a wide range of services and facilities including:

- Postal services
- Banking
- Payment of bills
- Insurance services
- Currency exchange
- Car tax
- Phone cards and/or mobiles

Money gram – If you need to send or receive money in a hurry, the Post Office® offers the MoneyGram® international money transfer service that enables you to quickly send and receive cash domestically or internationally, without the need for a bank account or credit card. Money can be sent to more than 125,000 locations in 170 countries (see below). MoneyGram® is available from any Post Office branch.

For details about Post Office products and services, telephone: 08457 22 33 44 or visit the website: www.postoffice.co.uk/

Other useful services:

Western Union Money Transfers – This service allows you to send and receive money from relatives and friends anywhere in the world. For further information telephone: 0800 833 833.
LOOKING FOR WORK
SECTION FOUR
LOOKING FOR WORK

There are many ways of finding work in the UK.

**Jobcentre Plus** is part of the Department for Work and Pensions. The Jobcentre Plus network is made up of Jobcentre Plus offices, Jobcentres and Social Security offices all over the UK. You do not have to be unemployed to use these services, which are provided free of charge.

All the offices have Job points. Here they will list the jobs available in your area. Touch screen kiosks allow you to search all kind of jobs and in most Jobcentres there is a telephone available from which you can enquire about local jobs, free of charge. An adviser within the Jobcentre can support you in finding employment and can provide you with a list of employment agencies in your area.

Jobcentre Plus vacancies are also advertised on the internet: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

If you are unable to get to your local Jobcentre, Jobseeker Direct 0845 6060234 is a quick and easy phone service to help you find a full-time or part-time job. They will tell you about vacancies in your local area and beyond. If you are interested in a job, they can tell you how to apply, send you an application form and, wherever possible, ring the employer to arrange an interview. Lines are open between 8am–6pm Monday–Friday, and 9am–1pm on Saturdays. All calls are charged at local rates.

**Local newspapers** – often have a job supplement on a specific day of the week. Check the local press for work that is local to you. You will save money by going to the library to look through newspapers instead of buying them.

**Temporary employment agencies** – are an important source of jobs in the UK. Look for addresses and telephone numbers under Employment Agencies or Personnel Consultants in a business directory, e.g. Yellow Pages, or search the internet. The list of employment agencies can also be obtained from a Jobcentre Plus office adviser. You can find business directories in your local library. Most employment agencies are specialised in different areas like catering, cleaning or warehouse work. Try to register with as many reputable agencies as you can to increase your chances of finding employment (registrations are free of charge).

**Gangmasters** – employ workers usually to provide services in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, shellfish gathering and food processing and packaging on a temporary basis. You need to ensure the gangmaster is licensed by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA), to ensure you receive the appropriate UK employment rights. For further information contact the GLA on 0845 602 5020 between 9am–5pm or visit [www.gla.gov.uk](http://www.gla.gov.uk)
Active work search: Going directly to the employer if you see an advertisement in a window or a newspaper or if you hear from someone that they have job vacancies, is one of the fastest ways of finding work. Sometimes the employer doesn’t advertise the vacancy and if they are looking for a new employee you could be invited for the interview. Even if you are not sure that they need someone immediately you can leave your CV or fill in an application form and then you could be invited for the interview when a vacancy appears.

If you are unemployed and make a claim for benefits, Jobcentre Plus can offer you a wide range of training opportunities (free of charge) to help you back into the job market. The learndirect Careers Advice line 0800 100 900 can give you free advice on careers, funding and childcare, plus information on nearly a million courses nationwide. For further information visit www.learndirect.co.uk

Set up and register as self-employed – If you come from one of the new EU member states and intend to be self-employed, you do not need to register with the WRS scheme. However all individuals who intend to become self-employed must register with HM Revenue & Customs. There are no registration fees to pay, but you’ll need to keep records and accurate accounts to ensure you are paying the correct tax and are working within the law. To register to become self-employed call HM Revenue & Customs Newly Self-Employed Helpline 0845 915 4515. You can also download a form to register as self-employed from the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) website, which contains some useful information about working for yourself, visit: www.hmrc.gov.uk/selfemployed/

Business Link is a Government-funded organisation which can support you with setting up your own business. All their advice is independent and impartial and most services are provided free of charge. They can help with advice about starting up the business, taxes, import and export advice, maintaining and expanding your business. For more information visit www.businesslink.gov.uk or telephone: 0845 915 4515

Writing a CV (Curriculum Vitae) – Your CV is a document which details your educational and work experience. It is your chance to show an employer you’ve got the skills and experience needed, and that you're the right person for the job. Getting an interview can depend on how good your CV is, so it is important to get your CV right. You can get advice on how to improve your CV, or write your first CV, from learndirect careers coaches. You can call them on 08080 100 333. Lines are open 8am to 10pm, seven days a week. You can also email an adviser or request a call back at a time to suit you. For further information visit www.learndirect-advice.co.uk/helpwithyourcareer/writecv/

You may also be able to get support from the following advice services:
**nextstep**
nextstep offers face-to-face advice on careers, learning and work. To find your local nextstep provider visit [http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/](http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/)

**Connexions Direct**
Connexions Direct provides advice on careers, learning and employment for young adults (below age 20). To find your local Connexions provider visit [www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com)
SECTION

FIVE

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS
SECTION FIVE
EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Legal migrant workers have the same rights at work as a UK worker.

These rights include:
- The National Minimum Wage
- Working time rights (including breaks, holidays and holiday pay)
- Health and safety protection within the workplace

The National Minimum Wage
This is the minimum that you should be paid for each hour that you work:
- If you are 22 or over you should get paid a minimum of £5.52 an hour
- If you are aged 18 to 21 you should get paid a minimum of £4.60 an hour
- If you are 16 or 17 you should get paid a minimum of £3.40 an hour

Visit the HM Revenue & Customs website at www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/help.htm for further information.

New National Minimum Wage rates from 1 October 2008:
- If you are 22 or over you should get paid a minimum of £5.73 an hour
- If you are aged 18 to 21 you should get paid a minimum of £4.77 an hour
- If you are 16 or 17 you should get paid a minimum of £3.53 an hour


Any person employed to undertake agricultural work is entitled to be paid at least the minimum rates of pay set by the Agricultural Wages Board. The minimum rates and the other terms and conditions of employment that apply to agricultural workers are set out in the Agricultural Wages Order. The current Agricultural Wages Order and any relevant guidance notes are available at www.defra.gov.uk/farm/working/agwages/index.htm. There is also an Agricultural Wages Helpline on: 0845 0000 134 or 01270 754106.

If you think that you are not being paid the minimum wage you can also make a complaint directly to the National Minimum Wage Helpline on 0845 6000678. Callers can be assisted in 30 different languages.

Working time rights
Working time rights include rest breaks, holidays and holiday pay, night work and how many hours you can work each week.
**SECTION FIVE**
**EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS**

- **Rest breaks:** You have the right to a rest break of 20 minutes where your working day is longer than six hours. If you are under 18, you are entitled to a 30-minute break after working four and a half hours.

- **Holidays:** As a full-time employee, you are entitled to 24 days’ paid annual leave. Public holidays are counted as part of this entitlement. For UK holidays see [www.bankholidaydates.co.uk](http://www.bankholidaydates.co.uk)

- **Night work:** Regular night workers should not work more than eight hours in each 24-hour period, when averaged over four months.

- **Working week:** You have the right not to work more than 48 hours a week on average. This limit is averaged over a 17-week period. You can agree to work more hours, but cannot be forced to do so.

**Health and safety protection**

Your employer and you have a duty under the law to ensure your health, safety and welfare at work. In general, your employer’s duties are:

- Making your workplace safe without risks to health
- Ensuring plant and machinery are safe and safe systems of work are set and followed
- Dangerous articles and substances are moved, stored and used safely

Your employer is required to provide adequate welfare facilities, and give you the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary for your health and safety. For further information on all aspects of employment rights visit [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk/) and click on Working Rights or call the TUC’s Know Your Rights line on 0870 600 4882.

**Trade union membership**

As a migrant worker you are entitled by law to join a trade union. You do not have to tell your employer if you are a member. You cannot be discriminated against or sacked for being a trade union member.

There are some excellent trade unions in Britain, including the GMB (Britain’s general union), T&GWU, Unison and many more. Trade unions will protect you and your health and safety at work and will professionally represent you if you have any difficulties at work. They exist to promote the interests of their members by securing better pay and working conditions, increasing health and safety awareness and ensuring equality for all members including migrant workers. Trade unions have teams of qualified legal experts to offer you free legal advice on any matters, whether personal or work-related.
employment law, social security law, occupational accidents, diseases and road traffic accidents.

For further information visit www.tuc.org.uk/ and click on Working Rights or call the TUC’s Know Your Rights line on 0870 600 4882.

Protection from discrimination
All individuals have the right to be treated equally and should not be discriminated against on the grounds of their gender, race, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, age, disability, nationality, religion or belief.

There are specific laws against some types of discrimination (called ‘unlawful discrimination’). If your employer treats you less favourably for an unlawful reason, you may be able to take action. Visit the following website for further information: www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/DiscriminationAtWork/index.htm

Notice of dismissal from work
If you are dismissed from your job, you will usually be entitled to a period of notice. This is the length of time between being told you will have to leave your job and the day that you actually leave (the date of your dismissal).

If you have been dismissed as part of a disciplinary procedure please check the policies with your employers. Notice is not always required under certain circumstances relating to a disciplinary procedure.

How much notice should you get?
The law says that the minimum period of notice you should get is:

- One week if you have worked for your employer for one month but less than two years
- Two weeks if you have worked for your employer for two whole years
- Two weeks plus an extra week for each full year’s employment, if you have worked for your employer for more than two years. This should be added to the notice period and can be a maximum of 12 weeks’ notice in total
- Between six and 12 months’ notice, if you are due to retire

You should never get less notice than the law allows, but your contract of employment might entitle you to more notice than this, so it is always a good idea to check your contract of employment.
How should you get your notice?
You should receive a letter from your employer telling you that they are dismissing you, with an explanation of the reasons for your dismissal. Your employer should tell you when the dismissal is to take effect and how much notice they are going to give you. The dismissal does not have to be in writing, and can be given verbally, but it is good practice to receive it in writing and it should never be received from a third person.

If you have been dismissed without notice and not offered pay instead, you may be able to take your employer to court for breaking your employment contract (breach of contract). In this instance you should seek further advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or ACAS. If you are a member of a trade union, they will also be able to help you with regard to receiving the correct dismissal procedures.

Citizens Advice Bureau advisers provide free confidential, impartial and independent advice on a limitless range of subjects, including dismissal rights. They can also refer you to a more specialist source of advice, if needed. To find your nearest CAB, including those that give advice by email, visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk. You can also look in your local telephone directory.

ACAS – offers free, confidential and impartial advice on all employment rights issues. Call the ACAS Helpline on 08457 47 47 47 from 8am–6pm Monday–Friday.

Pay during the notice period
In most cases, if you work your usual hours, you should be paid your normal weekly or monthly wage during your notice period.

If you are willing to work during your notice period but are not given any work to do, are on holiday or are off sick, you will still be entitled to your normal wage. However, if your contract of employment gives you at least one week’s more notice than the minimum allowed by law, your right to any pay during your notice period will depend entirely on what it says in your contract.

If your employer has dismissed you without giving you the correct notice, you may be offered pay for this period instead. This is known as pay in lieu of notice or severance pay. If the amount of pay in lieu is not correct, you should seek further advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or ACAS.

During your notice period
During the notice period your normal terms and conditions of work apply. If you are entitled to take holidays and your employer agrees, you may take them during the notice period.
Fixed-term contracts and early notice
If you are on a fixed-term contract you may have either:
- A contract which has a start and end date; or
- A contract which runs for the length of time it takes to complete a particular task

If you are on a contract that has a start and end date, it means that your job will end on the date your contract says. You will not get any extra notice. Your contract may have a term that allows your employer to end the contract earlier than this date (an early termination clause). If this is the case, you will have the right to one week’s notice of dismissal if your contract is ended early. You will only have this right if you have worked for your employer for at least one month.

Redundancy

What is redundancy?
Redundancy means that you are dismissed because your job is no longer required. Redundancy can occur when:
- A business closes down
- Changes to the company are made and certain job roles are no longer needed
- The business moves to another location

If you have been made redundant, but feel none of these situations applies, it may be that the dismissal is unfair. When employers are deciding who to make redundant they must not discriminate against anyone and the redundancy must be for a genuine reason. For example, employers are not allowed to make you redundant because you have become pregnant, because of your age or due to your ethnicity or religious beliefs. However, they are allowed to take into account how long you have been working for the company. Individuals who have been working at the company for the shortest amount of time are more likely to be made redundant than employees who have worked for the company for several years. If you think you have been unfairly chosen for redundancy you should seek advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or contact ACAS.

Citizens Advice Bureau – give free, confidential, impartial and independent advice on a limitless range of subjects, including redundancy rights. They can also refer you to a more specialist source of advice, if needed. To find your nearest CAB, including those that give advice by e-mail, visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk. You can also look in your local telephone directory.

ACAS – offers free, confidential and impartial advice on all employment rights issues. Call the ACAS Helpline on 08457 47 47 47 from 8am–6pm Monday–Friday or visit Directgov website www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/index.htm
The company in which you work may offer you an alternative job role instead of making you redundant. This has got to be a realistic choice, which you are capable and able to do. You could lose out on redundancy pay if you turn down a suitable job, so it is a good idea to seek advice if you are not happy with the substitute position you are offered. Both the Citizens Advice Bureau and ACAS will be able to give you free, confidential advice with regards to your employment rights.

Notice of redundancy
When your employer makes you redundant, there are certain procedures which they must adhere to. For example, they must give you notice of the redundancy. The minimum period of notice is:

- One week if you have worked for your employer for one month and over (but less than two years)
- Two weeks if you have worked for your employer for two whole years; and
- One additional week for each further whole year's employment up to a maximum of twelve weeks' notice in total

This period of notice is also required if you decide to leave the company.

Your employment contract might say that you must be given more notice than this, but it cannot be less (this is also true if you decide to leave the company).

Additional redundancy procedures include:
- Time off to look for another job (however you must have worked for your employer for at least two years to get time off, unless your contract says otherwise)
- Redundancy pay. Your employment contract may detail how much redundancy pay you'll get. If not, you'll get a set amount of money, as long as you've worked for your employer for at least two years. This is called a statutory redundancy payment. How much you'll get will depend on how long you've worked for your employer. For further information visit [www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/employment/redundancy.htm](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/life/employment/redundancy.htm)
- You should also get all the holiday pay due to you

If you have the right to a redundancy payment but your employer doesn't give it to you, you should seek advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau or ACAS as soon as possible, as there is a time limit within which you must take action, to ensure you receive the relevant redundancy payment.
Money matters
If you have been made redundant, and haven't got another job to go to, you'll need to think about your money situation. You might get cash help from the government or local authority (benefits). For example, you might get Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Housing Benefit, and Council Tax Benefit, free school meals for your children and help with NHS costs. Benefits depend on your circumstances. Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau, who will be able to support you with regards to accessing financial support.

Maternity rights

How much maternity leave can you take?
You have the right to take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave, regardless of how long you have worked for your employer.

The first 26 weeks of maternity leave is called Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML). During this time you will get the same rights under your contract of employment as if you were still employed. The only difference is that you will not get your normal pay unless your contract allows for it.

You can also take an additional 26 weeks' maternity leave called Additional Maternity Leave (AML). This makes a total of 52 weeks' maternity leave. If you're taking Additional Maternity Leave this must follow on straight after Ordinary Maternity Leave. There must be no gap between the two. During your Additional Maternity Leave, only certain terms of your contract apply. This has to be agreed between yourself and your employer.

Your contract of employment may give you extra rights to maternity leave, but it can't give you less than the legal requirement.

You can begin your maternity leave at any time from the 11th week before your baby is due. If you want, you can work right up to the day your baby is born. You don't need to tell your employer that you are returning to work unless you want to return earlier. You must give your employer at least eight weeks' warning if you want to return to work earlier than the agreed date.

When to tell your employer you want to take maternity leave
You must tell your employer, by the end of the 15th week before the baby is due:
- That you are pregnant
- The date your baby is due; and
- The date you want your maternity leave to start
You will be required to give your employer a medical certificate called a MATB1. You can get this from your midwife or GP. It gives the date your baby is due.

Once you have told your employers that you want to take maternity leave, they must write to you within 28 days and tell you the date you should come back to work.

The Directgov TIGER website has an interactive calculator which helps you to calculate what maternity leave you are entitled to and how much pay you are entitled to. Go to http://tiger.direct.gov.uk/cgi-bin/maternity.cgi

**Pay during maternity leave**

You are entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay if employed by the same employer without a break for at least 26 weeks into the qualifying week, which is the 15th week before the week your baby is due (part weeks count as full weeks), and earning before tax an average of £87 a week.

Statutory Maternity Pay provides you with some money to help you to take time off before and after the birth of your baby. It is paid by your employer.

If you get Statutory Maternity Pay, your employer will pay you 90% of your average weekly earnings for the first six weeks, then up to £117.18 for the remaining 33 weeks.

**Maternity Allowance**

If you can't get Statutory Maternity Pay from your employer, you might get Maternity Allowance (MA) if you:

- Are employed (but earn under £87 a week)
- Are not employed but have worked close to or during your pregnancy
- Are self-employed

The conditions are that you have:

- Worked (either on an employed or self-employed basis) for at least 26 of the 66 weeks before the week your baby was due (a part week counts as a full week).
- Earned an average of £30 over any 13 of those 66 weeks

The standard rate of MA is £117.18 or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is less.

**Other family benefits you may be entitled to**

There are a number of additional benefits available to expectant and new mothers. These include Child Trust Funds, Sure Start Maternity grants, Child Benefit, free
prescriptions and dental treatment and Tax Credits. Whether you qualify for these benefits will depend on your personal situation.

For more info visit www.direct.gov.uk or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau www.citizensadvice.org.uk

If your employer refuses to pay you during maternity leave, you experience unfair treatment at work because of pregnancy or maternity leave or you are dismissed from work because of pregnancy or maternity leave you should contact ACAS. ACAS offers free, confidential and impartial advice on all employment rights issues. Call the ACAS Helpline on 08457 47 47 47 from 8am–6pm Monday–Friday.

Returning to work after maternity leave
If your employer refuses to let you return to work after maternity leave, this is a dismissal. You will be able to make a complaint to an employment tribunal for unfair dismissal and/or sex discrimination. If you have taken 26 weeks’ Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML), you have the right to return to the same job as the one you had before you went on leave. If you have taken Additional Maternity Leave (AML) as well as OML, you are entitled to return to the same job unless your employer says this is not reasonable. In this case, you should be offered another suitable job with the same pay and conditions as you had before maternity leave. If your employer does not offer you another suitable job, or offers you an unsuitable job and dismisses you when you refuse it, you will be able to claim unfair dismissal and/or sex discrimination from an employment tribunal. Contact ACAS for further information with regard to making a complaint.

If you were working full-time before your maternity leave, you may want to return to work part-time, job share or on different hours. This is called flexible working. Your employer does not have to agree to let you do flexible working, but they must treat your request seriously, or they may be in breach of the sex discrimination act.

Employment rights – Useful websites (recommended by the TUC website)
workSMART www.worksmart.org.uk
Directgov www.direct.gov.uk
ACAS www.acas.org.uk
Department of Trade and Industry www.dti.gov.uk/er/regs.htm
National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux www.adviceguide.org.uk
Health and Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/index.htm
Commission for Racial Equality www.cre.gov.uk
Equal Opportunities Commission www.eoc.org.uk
Disability Rights Commission www.drc-gb.org
LAGER (Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights) www.lager.dircon.co.uk
SECTION SIX

ESOL (ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES)
ESOL
(English for Speakers of Other Languages)

Improving your English will help you get more out of your life in the UK and help you settle into your new environment, although demand is very high in various parts of the country for ESOL courses, which in some places has produced waiting lists.

If there are any courses available in your country to help you learn the basics of English it is highly recommended that you access these prior to your move to the UK just to help you in the first instance.

ESOL courses concentrate on the language of daily life, as well as including reading and writing skills. Course length varies widely and there are courses at different levels (although again due to demand, higher level ESOL is not always available).

ESOL courses are usually held in schools, colleges, adult education centres or training providers. They are also accessible online and via libraries. For a comprehensive list of where these are available please look at www.learndirect.co.uk or alternatively call 0800 100 900.

If you are in contact with a careers adviser (as detailed in the Information, advice and guidance section of this booklet) they would also be able to advise you where these courses are available.

Some courses are free, dependent upon your circumstances, but for some more advanced courses that are available there may be a charge. Please check prior to booking yourself on one of these.

There are some ESOL courses available online, which can be ideal if you have access to a computer, as you can learn at your own pace and in your own time.

www.onlineesol.co.uk This allows you to gain an accredited ESOL certificate which covers Entry Level 1, 2 and 3. This course is designed for anybody who wants to improve their English. If you speak a bit of English but are not very confident then these courses are for you.

www.learndirect.co.uk have a Welcome to English course, which is a good course if you find it hard to speak and understand English. You can call learndirect 0800 101 901 for further help and advice in relation to this course.
SECTION

SEVEN

NARIC,
HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION COURSES
What are the entry requirements for UK universities?
Each university course has separate entry requirements. You should ask the admissions officer at the university of your choice for further information. You can also find out about entry requirements for university courses at www.ucas.com

Will the qualifications from my home country be recognised in the UK?
Most universities have a good understanding of qualifications issued in countries other than the UK. However, if you would like information on the UK equivalent to your current qualifications you should contact the British Council in your home country, details of which can be found at www.britishcouncil.org/where or contact NARIC.

NARIC is the National Academic Recognition Information Centre and is responsible for compiling information on international qualifications for the Department for Education and Skills. You can get more information by visiting www.naric.org.uk

What services are available through UK NARIC?
NARIC provides information on the comparability of qualifications from overseas. The comparability information supplied by UK NARIC is designed to assist you when applying for jobs or courses in the UK. The Letter of Comparability or Career Path Report can be presented to employers or institutions as supporting information, together with your CV or application form, as confirmation of the recognition of your overseas qualifications in the UK. This will enable potential employers or admitting institutions to make informed decisions about the suitability of your qualification(s) for the job or course for which you are applying.

How much does it cost and how long does it take?
The cost of having your qualifications assessed depends on what service you want. The charge for a standard service Letter of Comparability is £40 plus VAT (£47), and £34 plus VAT (£39.95) if you apply online. This service normally takes between 10 and 15 working days.

Will my UK qualification be recognised in my home country?
UK qualifications are recognised all over the world. If you would like to know what your UK qualification will be equivalent to in your home country you should contact NARIC or ENIC (European Network of Information Centre) for your country, details of which can be found at www.support4learning.org.uk

Do I need a visa to study in the UK?
Students from the EEA (European Economic Area) do not need permission to study in the UK. If you are not part of the EEA and are unsure about your visa status or you need further information please visit www.ukvisas.gov.uk
Where can I find information on courses in the UK?
You can search a full database of courses in the UK on the EducationUK course
database. EducationUK has a vast amount of helpful information for migrants looking to
study in the UK. For further information visit www.educationuk.org

Am I entitled to any help with my tuition fees?
If you are from the EU, you may be able to get financial support to help you to study in
the UK. You can find information including contact details at
www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFin-
ance/StudentsFromOtherEUCountries/DG_10035218

If you are planning to study in Scotland you should contact the Student Awards Agency
for Scotland www.student-support-saas.gov.uk

If you are planning to study in Northern Ireland you should contact Student Support for
Northern Ireland www.student-support.org.uk

Useful educational contacts
British Council offices worldwide
www.britishcouncil.org/where
Tel: +44 (0)161 957 7755
Fax: +44 (0)161 957 7762
Minicom: +44 (0)161 957 7188
Email: general.enquiries@britishcouncil.org

Department for Education and Skills European Team
www.dfes.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/University
AndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/StudentsFromOtherEUCountries/DG_10035218
Tel: + 44 (0) 1325 391199
Fax: + 44 (0) 1325 391220
Email: EUTeam@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

UKCOSA The Council for International Education
www.ukcosa.org.uk
The Advice and Training Team
Tel: +44 (0) 020 7107 9922
SECTION SEVEN
NARIC, HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION COURSES

NARIC, The National Academic Recognition Information Centre
www.naric.org.uk
UK NARIC
Tel: +44 (0)871 330 7033
Fax: +44 (0)1242 258611
Email: info@naric.org.uk
UCAS
www.ucas.com
UCAS Enquiries,
Tel: +44 (0) 1242 1122211
Email: enquiries@ucas.ac.uk
The National Health Service (NHS) provides health services in the UK.

In the UK your first point of health care contact could be with doctors, dentists, opticians, pharmacists, or with hospitals for emergencies.
Doctors
You and all members of your family should register with a GP (General Practitioner or family doctor) in the area you are living. To find your local surgery contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or alternatively look on the website where you can do a search for your local doctor’s surgery at www.nhs.uk

When you register with a doctor you will be asked to complete an application form and later you will receive your NHS medical card, which is the proof that you are entitled to NHS treatment. If you cannot register with a doctor, call your Primary Care Trust. The information can be obtained from NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or via the website on www.nhs.uk

Dentists
Not all dentists will provide NHS dental services. A lot of dentists only offer private services and have opted out of offering treatment via the NHS. If you want to register with an NHS dentist, as with the doctor, check on the website www.nhs.uk or call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 and then contact your local dental surgery and ask to be registered. If you cannot register with an NHS dentist, contact your local Primary Care Trust. You will need to pay for any NHS dental treatment unless you are under a certain age or receiving certain Social Security benefits.

To locate emergency dental treatment contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647.

Pharmacists (chemists)
They will be able to help you and offer advice without an appointment and are able to sell some medicines that do not need to be prescribed by the doctor. Pharmacists are often based at chemists/pharmacies within shops and supermarkets or are based independently. They are easy to locate as they are identified by the green cross.

Hospitals
The accident and emergency departments are not suitable for all medical issues. They are to support patients who require immediate, urgent treatment.

To locate your nearest hospital go to www.nhs.uk and search via your location. This site also details what is available via the hospital and if it has accident and emergency facilities. Alternatively contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647 for further information.
Family Planning Clinics
Family Planning Clinics offer free, confidential advice and information on contraception and sexual health. They offer advice on contraception including free supplies of condoms, free pregnancy tests, pregnancy advice and unplanned pregnancy advice.

To get details of your nearest clinic contact the Family Planning Association on 0845 122 8690 (9am–6pm Monday–Friday) or alternatively have a look on their website www.fpa.org.uk and search for a clinic in your area.

Pregnancy
You can get a pregnancy test free from your Family Planning Clinic or alternatively go to see your local GP (General Practitioner). There is also a wide range of pregnancy tests that you can purchase from shops, chemists and supermarkets.

If you find out or think you are pregnant, you should visit your local General Practitioner or your local Family Planning Clinic as detailed above. They will confirm whether or not you are pregnant and discuss your options and what your next steps should be.

The care you receive from your GP, midwife or other health professional is known as antenatal care. Your first antenatal appointment should take place early in your pregnancy – within the first 12 weeks.

There are classes available known as antenatal classes. These cover things like what to expect during labour, information about pain relief, preparing for a new baby, relaxation techniques and common emotions experienced during pregnancy, labour and after the birth.

For further information on pregnancy, have a look at the NHS website www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk and search for pregnancy. Alternatively you could call the Family Planning Association on 0845 122 8690 or look on their website at www.fpa.org.uk

Registering your baby's birth
Once your baby arrives, you'll need to register his or her birth. This is not only a legal requirement but is a means for you to get the official documentation you need to claim Child Benefit and register your baby for medical care from your GP. You will need to do this within 42 days of your baby's arrival.

Most hospitals will help you to register the birth of your child before you are discharged. However in some circumstances this isn't possible. In this instance you'll need to visit the local registry office and register the birth of your baby yourself. Your baby's arrival needs to be registered in the district where it made its first appearance into the world, so
ideally you'll visit the corresponding registry office. If this isn't possible you can go to another registry office and the registrar will forward the details for you.

To find information on your local registry office visit: www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/births/howdoifindmylocalregisteroffice/index.asp

For further information on registering newborn babies visit www.gro.gov.uk or telephone: 0151 471 4805 (9am–5pm Monday to Friday).

**PALS – Patient Advice and Liaison Services**
These services provide confidential advice and support to families and their carers and offer information on the NHS and health-related matters and information on how you can get more involved in your own healthcare.

They also offer explanations of the complaints procedures and how to get in contact with someone who can help.

Each NHS hospital has its own PALS. Each Primary Care Trust, Ambulance Trust, Acute Trust, Care Trust and Mental Health Trust has its own PALS.

To find out the contact details of your local PALS phone your local clinic, General Practitioner (GP), health centre or hospital and ask for details. Or alternatively phone NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or search the website www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk for details on how to locate your local hospital and the PALS address will be listed.
EMERGENCY SERVICES

The emergency services telephone number in the UK is 999. The emergency services include the police, fire brigade, ambulance and coastguard. Calls to the emergency services are free.

When calling 999, you will be connected to an operator who will ask for the telephone number you are calling from and then ask which service you require.

If you are not proficient in English, all English police forces have access to interpreters and translation services, so no matter what language you speak there will be somebody able to assist you.
SECTION NINE
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police
Call 999 when an ‘immediate’ response is required. This number should only be used in cases where a crime is happening now or if anyone is in immediate danger. For other types of crimes you should contact your local police station.

To find out contact details and information about your local police station go to www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk

Fire and rescue
Call 999 and ask for the fire and rescue service if you see a fire, if any other individual is in danger and needs rescuing, if individuals are in danger due to flooding or there has been an incident where chemicals are involved.

Community and safety manuals are available in a number of different languages. For further information visit www.fireservice.co.uk

Ambulance
Call 999 and ask for an ambulance if you or anyone else requires emergency medical help.

St Johns Ambulance is a leading UK charity. It has a number of useful first aid leaflets available in various different languages and also offers first aid training to ensure you are able to cope in an emergency. For further information visit www.sja.org.uk

Coastguard
You should call the coastguard if you or anyone else is in distress at sea, or at risk from injury or death on the cliffs or shoreline of the United Kingdom. Tel : 02380 329 323

For more information visit www.mcga.gov.uk
Large cities and towns have very good transport links but if you move to a rural area the public transport available can be very sporadic and, in some cases, depending on where you live, this can often create difficulties getting to and from work if you are working unsociable hours. Therefore you might find that you need a vehicle to get around. The following explains the law in relation to driving and requirements for vehicle ownership.

In the UK remember to drive on the left-hand side of the road.

To drive a vehicle in the UK you must have the following documentation:
- A driving licence in accordance with the type of vehicle driven (most foreign licences are valid for 12 months from the time of your arrival)
- Insurance (only persons named on the insurance documentation are allowed to drive the vehicle)
- MOT (Ministry of Transport) Certificate – your vehicle must have a yearly test certificate of road worthiness (compulsory for all cars over 3 years old)
- Tax disc – road tax
- Registering the vehicle is normally done by the person selling you the vehicle. If they do not have the relevant paperwork, contact the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) by calling 0870 240 0009 or visit the website at www.dvla.gov.uk for further information

Whilst driving the car the following are legal requirements:
- The driver and all passengers must wear a seatbelt. This includes passengers in the back of the car where seatbelts are available
- A three-year-old child must be in a correct child restraint
- In almost all cases, every child up to 135cms (4' 5") or the age of 12 (whichever is reached first) must use a child restraint and drivers may not carry children as passengers just in seat belts
- Rear-facing baby seats must not be used in a seat protected by a front airbag unless the airbag has been deactivated manually or automatically
- Do not use your mobile phone when driving, it is illegal
- If you are involved in an accident, you must stop and exchange details with all other drivers involved. If someone has been injured, the police must be called
- Stay within the speed limits. Speed cameras are in operation at various locations across the country
- Do not drive a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs
Whilst driving a motorbike/moped the following are legal requirements:

- If you have a provisional motorcycle licence you must satisfactorily complete a Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) course
- To obtain your full motorcycle licence you must pass a theory test and then a practical test
- If you have a full car licence you may ride motorcycles up to 125cc and 11kw output, but you must first satisfactorily complete a CBT course if you have not already done so
- If in doubt as to whether your licence is sufficient contact the DVLA
- An approved helmet MUST be worn at all times whilst riding a motorbike/moped (including whilst riding a pillion passenger)

Riding a bicycle:

- Lights must be displayed at night
- Cycling on the pavement is prohibited (unless a cycle path has been designated for use alongside pedestrians)
- Traffic light laws apply to cyclists too. Do not go through red lights
- It is recommended that you wear a high visibility outfit and protective helmet

The above is just an overview of the law in relation to driving in the UK. Please make yourself familiar with all road signs and laws by having a look at the Highway Code. This is available to purchase online at www.direct.gov.uk under the Travel and Transport Section – Highway Code. Alternatively you can buy a copy at most book shops or try your local library for a copy to borrow. If in doubt contact the relevant agencies detailed below for further help and advice.

- **MOT** – MOTs are performed in many garages and tests are valid for 1 year. This test is to ensure your car is roadworthy
- **Insurance** – You could find it difficult or more expensive to get British insurance because the companies impose high premiums on foreigners and many insurance companies will not cover foreign drivers, whom they categorise as ‘exceptional risks’. You should check and get quotes from a variety of insurance companies before you decide which insurance to take or you may pay more than you should
- **Tax** – Available from post offices or online (but you must have a valid insurance and MOT otherwise they will not allow you to purchase this)

DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) telephone number: 0870 240 0009
website: [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)
Driving
- You must stop when instructed to by police personnel
- If you are involved in an accident you must stop and exchange details with other drivers involved – if someone is injured you must contact the police
- It is unlawful to drive a vehicle whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- You must have tax, insurance and an MOT (for full information see Driving and vehicle ownership section)

Weapons
- Being in possession of or the use of weapons of any kind (including carrying a small pocket knife) is unlawful

Drugs
- It is unlawful to possess or supply controlled substances (eg cannabis, heroin, cocaine, LSD, ecstasy)
- A police officer has the right to search you if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that you are in possession of any drugs
- Giving a friend a drug is still seen by the law to be supply and is a criminal offence

Alcohol
- Drunk and disorderly behaviour, breaching the peace and fighting are seen as a criminal offence

Sexual activity
- Prostitution and soliciting are illegal
- It is an offence to conduct any sexual behaviour towards any person without their consent
- It is unlawful to have sexual contact with any person under the age of 16 years

The following are also unlawful:
- Begging and littering
- Smoking in public areas
- Selling door-to-door or on the street without a local authority licence
- Being on private property without the owner’s consent
- Selling copies of CDs, DVDs and computer games

If you are a witness to a crime, including domestic violence, or if you are intimidated or harassed due to your nationality, ethnicity, beliefs, gender, disability or sexuality, it is important that you report it to the police by dialling 999 or you can report any incident or hate crime online at www.report-it.org.uk
For advice on issues relating to sexual harassment or discrimination you could also contact the Equal Opportunities Commission on 0845 601 5901 or www.eoc.org.uk but for any unlawful activity contact the police in the first instance.

If you feel you have been the victim of racial harassment contact the Commission for Racial Equality on 0845 604 6610 or alternatively visit the website at www.cre.gov.uk
There are various organisations that can offer you information, advice and guidance in relation to learning and work. The following organisations and projects would be able to help you in your search for learning and work and also be able to signpost you to various services in your area to help and support you.

**learndirect Careers Advice Line – 0800 100 900**

This is a free phone number which puts you in contact with an adviser who can give you information, advice and guidance on any work, learning and career related issues via the telephone, including finding a job, how to write a CV and interview skills. Job profiles are also available, which detail all jobs available and the current qualification requirements, with contact addresses and telephone numbers.

*learndirect Careers Advice* will be able to advise you on educational courses available including ESOL, further education and higher education.

They currently have advisers who speak Polish and French.

Website: [www.learndirect-advice.co.uk](http://www.learndirect-advice.co.uk)

**nextstep**

nextstep is a free, face-to-face service, offering advice on learning and careers. This service is offered by a variety of organisations across the country, which are well-placed to offer help and support in your search for a job and a career.

Your adviser will have access to information and opportunities which can help you either to get into work, improve your interview techniques or write a CV and they can give advice on job applications.

Information and contact details are available via the internet links below. If you don’t have access to the internet call *learndirect Careers Advice* on 0800 100 900 and they will be able to give you the telephone number of the face-to-face services provided by nextstep in your area.

Websites:
[http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/](http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/)
[www.learndirect-advice.co.uk](http://www.learndirect-advice.co.uk)
[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/DG_071762](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/DG_071762)
Student services – based within colleges and universities
All colleges and universities have a student services department that can offer you information, advice and guidance. The majority offer impartial advice as part of the nextstep service (see above), and are very well placed to give you guidance on becoming a student, how to access funding, childcare issues and career development. A lot of colleges and universities also offer ESOL courses. As there are a large number of colleges and universities, please contact learndirect on 0800 100 900 for information on the colleges and universities within the area that you have moved to.

Website: www.learndirect-advice.co.uk
Early years
Choosing childcare and education for your child is a big step for you and your child. You can find out about the childcare, early education and other care and support services for children and parents in your area from your local Children’s Information Service visit www.childcarelink.gov.uk or call 0800 2 346 346. The Children’s Information Service can provide information on childcare and early years education, and also provide additional help and advice with all aspects of childcare and early years.

Sure Start supports parents with children from conception through to age 14, and up to age 16 for those with special educational needs and disabilities. Sure Start is a government initiative to bring together childcare, early education and health and family support services for families. Their website is www.surestart.gov.uk but full details about Sure Start programmes and locations can be found by contacting the Children’s Information Service (as detailed above) on 0800 2 346 346.

Another good source of information is the Directgov website www.direct.gov.uk

Pre-school and pre-preparatory
Every 3- and 4-year-old in England is entitled to 12.5 hours of free early learning per week for 38 weeks of the year. This will rise to 15 hours a week from 2010, delivered flexibly over a minimum of three days.

Nursery classes and schools – these fall into two groups, state and private. Most day nurseries are privately run. Most nurseries will take your child between the ages of 3 and 5, although many do take younger.

Pre-school playgroups – are often non-profit making. They may be run by volunteers, often including parents. Most pre-school playgroups will take your child between the ages of 3 and 5, although some will take 2-year-olds.

Reception classes – Some primary schools are able to admit children under 5 into a reception class. They take children aged 4 and 5. They may take your child for half-day sessions at first and then build up to full-time.

Childminders – Usually these look after children in their home. Those people offering free early learning places for 3- and 4-year-olds, and all childminders who care for children under the age of 8, agree to meet certain quality standards and must be registered with Ofsted. Childminders look after children from a few months old up to the age of 5, and some look after children after school and in the holidays.
Contact 0800 2 346 346 for further information or alternatively have a look at the website on www.childcarelink.gov.uk

By law, all children of compulsory school age (5–16) must receive a suitable full-time education. For most parents, this means registering your child at a school.

Once your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your child fails to do so, you risk getting a penalty notice and being prosecuted.

Primary school – Aged 5–11 (12) years old
Children start their compulsory education in Year 1 and continue moving up a year until they reach Year 6.

Most children start school in a reception class at the age of 4 (as detailed above in pre-school and pre-preparatory).

Most children enter the state education system when they go to primary school at the age of 5 and generally move to secondary education at the age of 11.

The compulsory age for a child to start full-time education in the UK is at the beginning of the school term after the child’s 5th birthday.

Secondary education – 11(12)–16 years old
When a child starts secondary education they would be in Year 7 and continue moving up a year until they reach Year 11.

All UK secondary schools, both state and independent, teach pupils and prepare them for GCSEs and other qualifications. Examinations are taken before pupils leave school at age 16.

All children of compulsory school age, both those enrolled in school and those educated otherwise than at school, must remain in education until the last Friday in June in the school year that they reach the age of 16.

If you need to locate a school for your child, the public library will also have a list of local schools available, or alternatively contact the Children’s Information Service on 0800 2 346 346.

To register with a school, you have to contact the school directly and arrange to visit with your child.
Further and higher education
When a young person has left statutory education at sixteen, they often move into a school sixth form or college to undertake a wide variety of courses.

Dependent on which qualifications they undertook at sixth form or college, young people often go into higher education, which is normally undertaken at a university in order to obtain a degree.

(Further information is detailed within this booklet under the NARIC, higher and further education sections.)
SECTION FOURTEEN
INFORMATION AND USEFUL CONTACTS

Housing

Citizens Advice Bureau
The Citizens Advice Bureau helps people resolve their housing, employment, money, legal and other problems by providing free confidential information and advice. For further information visit: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

The CAB Advice Guide has various information sheets relating to employment, working rights which are available in some EEA languages – Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Slovak and Slovenian. These are available on the www.adviceguide.org.uk website.

Housing Association accommodation
You will need to contact your local county council to join the waiting list. To find your local council check on the following website www.direct.gov.uk/ Go to the Government, Citizens and Rights section and select Local Councils.

Shelter
They provide independent housing advice, including specialist support for the homeless. For free housing advice telephone 0808 800 4444 email info@shelter.org.uk website www.shelter.org.uk

Documents needed for working in the UK

Information about living and working in the UK is available from the Home Office UK Border Agency website www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/ or telephone 0870 606 7766.

National Insurance
In order to work legally in the UK, all individuals require a National Insurance number. For further information contact Jobcentre Plus National Insurance Line on 0845 600 0643 or website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Finance and banking

Post Offices
Post offices are available across the country and offer a wide range of services including postal services, banking and payment of bills etc. They also do Money Grams
which allow you to send and receive cash domestically or internationally. Telephone 08457 22 33 44 or visit the website at www.postoffice.co.uk

**Western Union money transfers**
This service allows you to send and receive money from relatives and friends anywhere in the world. For further information telephone 0800 833 833.

**Employment**

**Jobcentre Plus**
Provides help and advice on jobs, training for people who can work and, in some cases, financial help for those who are looking for work. Visit www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/index.html or telephone Job Seeker Direct on 0845 606 0234.

**Trade unions**
For trade union information and information on your employment rights visit www.tuc.org.uk/ or call the TUC’s Know Your Rights line on 0870 600 4882.

**The National Minimum Wage**
For the National Minimum Wage Helpline telephone 0845 6000678. Callers can be assisted in 30 different languages. Visit www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/help.htm for further information.

**ACAS**
ACAS offers free, confidential and impartial advice on all employment rights issues. Call the ACAS Helpline on 0845 47 47 47 from 8am–6pm Monday–Friday.

**ESOL courses**
ESOL courses are usually held in schools, colleges, adult education centres, training providers, or via online resources and libraries. For a comprehensive list of where these are available please look at www.learndirect.co.uk or alternatively call 0800 100 900.

**NARIC, higher and further education in the UK**
NARIC is the National Academic Recognition Information Centre. For information on the comparability of qualifications from overseas, you should visit www.naric.org.uk or call 0871 330 7033.
You can search a full database of courses in the UK on the EducationUK course website. EducationUK has a vast amount of helpful information for migrants looking to study in the UK. For further information visit www.educationuk.org

Health

The National Health Service (NHS) provides health services in the UK. NHS Direct offers a confidential information and advice service with regards to all health issues. Telephone 0845 46 47 (interpreters are available) or visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Emergency services

Telephone 999 for the police, fire brigade and ambulance services.

Driving and vehicle ownership

The DVLA and Directgov have a vast amount of information with regard to the law in relation to driving and requirements for vehicle ownership. Visit www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/index.htm and/or www.dvla.gov.uk Telephone: 0870 240 0009.

Law – brief overview

If you are a witness to a crime, including domestic violence, or if you are intimidated or harassed due to your nationality, ethnicity, beliefs, gender, disability or sexuality, it is important that you report it to the police by dialling 999 or you can report any incident or hate crime online at www.report-it.org.uk

For advice on issues relating to sexual harassment or discrimination you could also contact the Equal Opportunities Commission on 0845 601 5901 or www.eoc.org.uk but for any unlawful activity contact the police in the first instance. If you feel you have been the victim of racial harassment contact the Commission for Racial Equality on 0845 604 6610 or alternatively visit the website at www.cre.gov.uk
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nextstep
Face-to-face information, advice and guidance on careers, learning and employment. To find your local nextstep provider visit http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk

Connexions Direct
Advice on careers, learning and employment for young adults. To find your local Connexions provider visit www.connexions-direct.com

learndirect Careers Advice
learndirect Careers Advice offers careers advice, childcare advice and support and information with regards to learning throughout the UK. The learndirect Careers Advice helpline is on 0800 100 900 or you can visit the website on www.learndirect-advice.co.uk

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Another good source of information is the Directgov website www.direct.gov.uk

Advisory Centre for Education – Educational information service. Telephone 0808 800 5793 or visit www.ace-ed.org.uk
HM Revenue & Customs – Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit helpline
telephone 0845 300 3900 or visit www.hmrc.gov.uk